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Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry  
428 East Capitol Avenue  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

April 20, 2005

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Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary  
9300 East Hampton Drive  
Capitol Heights, MD 20743

Re: WC Docket No. 05-65; SBC Communications Inc. and AT&T Corp. Applications for Approval of Transfer of Control

Dear Federal Communications Commission/Marlene H. Dortch,

The U.S. telecom industry has been a critical engine for our country's economic development climate for many years, representing more than 3 percent of the U.S. GDP – the most of all high-tech industries. Productivity in the industry is strong; the Bureau of Economic Analysis estimates that each dollar invested in U.S. telecom infrastructure results in nearly three dollars of economic impact, and is likely to rise due to the availability of low-cost broadband service.

Along with productivity, employment has been largely affected by the telecom industry as well. Between 1998 and 2000, the telecom sector grew more than twice as fast as the national average, and by 2000, was paying nearly twice the average U.S. Salary. But, due to transformations in the industry, coupled with new technologies, competition is great and traditional telecommunications systems are being displaced. Since 2000, over 700,000 jobs have been lost in the sector and over \$2 trillion in market capitalization. Annual investment declined by more than \$70 billion, and the U.S. dropped to 11<sup>th</sup> in the world in deployment of advanced broadband networks. Simply put, the business risks associated with traditional telecommunications firms have been recognized by the capital markets, resulting in reduced access to capital and ever-increasing costs.

Currently, because of Broadband capacities, companies must be able to offer the now separate networks, local and long distance. Due to this demand in the telecommunications industry, the merger of SBC and AT&T provides an ideal opportunity. As one, SBC and AT&T can ensure a strong and vibrant industry, but separate, neither has the assets or expertise necessary to benefit customers. These two companies offer complimentary products that have been focused to different groups of consumers in the past. This merger will ensure that the companies remain one strong American company capable of providing the highest quality capabilities to business, government and residential customers globally. Competition will be enhanced, not harmed, by the expeditious merger of these two companies, therefore benefiting consumers and being in the overall interest of the American public.

Sincerely,

Daniel P. Mehan  
President/CEO

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